Discover Bulgaria!
Cultural Treasures of Bulgaria
Architectural Masterpieces - Houses, Churches, Monasteries
Wine and Cuisine
Bulgarian Mountains
Winter Tales from Bulgaria
Magnificent Black Sea Shore
Beauty and Health from 600 Mineral Springs
The Unique Bulgaria

USEFULL INFORMATION

State government system:
Capital city:
Official language:
Religion:
Time zone:
Climate:
Currency:
Important telephone numbers:
Airports:
Contacts:

Parliamentary Republic
Sofia (population 1.2 million)
Bulgarian, script – Cyrillic
Orthodox (85%), Muslim (8%), other (7%)
GMT (London) + 2, Eastern Europe time (Germany) + 1
Humid continental, in the southern parts – transitive Mediterranean. Average temperatures for January are from -2 to 2°C in the lowland and -10°C in the mountains, in July 19-25 degrees°C in the lowland and about 10 degrees°C in the higher parts of the mountains.
Rainfall - 450-600 mm in the lowland, up to 1300 mm in the mountains.
Bulgarian lev is fixed to the euro, 1 EUR = 1.955 BGN
code of Bulgaria: +359
European emergency number: 112
Sofia Airport - tel: +359 2 937 22 11
Plovdiv Airport - tel: +359 32 601127
Varna Airport - tel: +359 52 573 323
Burgas Airport - tel: +359 56 870 248
Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism
Bulgaria, 1052 Sofia, 8 Slavyanska Str.,
Tel. +359 2 94071, fax: +359 2 987 2190
e-mail: e-docs@mee.government.bg
www.mee.government.bg
www.bulgariatravel.org
National Tourism Information Center
Sofia 1000, 1 Sveta Nedelya Sqr.
tel: 02/ 933 58 11, 933 58 21, 933 58 26

Operational Programme “Regional development” 2007 – 2013
www.bgregio.eu
Investing in your future!
The project is financed by the European Regional Development Fund and the state budget of the Republic of Bulgaria
Scheme for free financial support BG 161PO001/3.3-01/2008 “Support for effective national marketing of tourism product and improvement of informational servicing” under Agreement BG161PO001/3.3-01-4 for the project “Elaboration and distribution of advertising and informational materials for promotion of Bulgaria as a tourism destination”
Positioned on the crossroad between Europe and Asia, Bulgaria is the treasury that combines Thracian, Byzantine and Roman culture. What awaits you are exciting meetings with the brilliant Thracian treasures and tombs, the Karanovka mound, and the ancient Roman amphitheatres...

Discover Bulgaria – a wonderful combination of nature, ancient culture, healing springs and warm sea. Eyes and heart would be enough to taste the incredible colour of the Balkans, the magical take-up of the Jasons’ festivals, the motley natural sites, the ranges from the Rhodope Mountains and the astonishing beauty of Bulgarian nature.

Bulgarian lands enjoy the magnificence of four different seasons – fragrant spring, hot summer, golden fruit-bearing autumn and snowy winter. Each season is splendid and brings different types of entertainment – for those who are fans of extreme sports, for those who appreciate good taverns and colourful festivities, for the ones who seek unique natural landmarks and ancient culture...

Bulgaria is famous for its 600 healing mineral water springs. Another main advantage is the bioclimate and the balneological resources in rare combinations known as mountain combination and sea combination. This mixture of wonderful nature and modern Spa-cure programmes contributes to Bulgaria being a preferred Spa and wellness destination.
Cultural Treasures of Bulgaria

Ancient Bulgarian capital cities! Pliska, Veliki Preslav, Veliko Tarnovo… majestic evidence of state’s power, cultural prosperity and national pride. Castles, fortress walls, basilicas… and a lot of wisdom collected through the centuries!

Important stop points in your trips in Bulgaria are the unique cultural monuments of UNESCO. Boyana Church and its exquisite wall-paintings, Madara Rider – the largest rock-relief in Europe, Tomb of Kazanlak – emblematic monument of the Thracian culture, Rila Monastery, Thracian Tomb of Kazanlak, Thracian Tomb of Sveshtari, Old town of Nessebar…

Lavish funerals in monumental tombs and in majestic mounds were typical for the aristocrats in the Thracian culture. The wall-paintings in the tomb of Kazanlak and the tomb close to Alexandrovo village are extraordinarily impressive. Another masterpiece of the Thracian funeral culture is the tomb of Sveshtari with its magnificent low-reliefs of caryatides.

Important archaeological discoveries in Bulgaria are Perpericon – the famous ancient sanctuary of the Dionysus, Starosel – the oldest Thracian tomb in South-eastern Europe and the incredible phiale mask of King Theres of Odrin. Magnificent portraits in the Ostrusha mound and Tatul – sanctuary for sacrificial ceremonies in the name of ancient Thracian deities. And the latest sensational discovery of the relics of St. Joan the Baptist on the island St. Ivan near Sozopol.

Ancient Thracians and their treasures! An insight into the way of life of people who lived more than 2,500 years ago. The most famous are the Panagyurishte Treasure, Rogozen Treasure, Vulchitrun Treasure and Letnitsa Treasure. The rhytones of Borovo Treasure will overwhelm you with their exquisiteness! The oldest decorated gold object in Europe was found in the Varna Chalcolithic Necropolis – dated 6,000 years old.
Bulgarian monasteries and churches are remarkable, among them are Rila Monastery, Bachkovo Monastery, Troyan Monastery, Rozhen Monastery, Preobrazhenski Monastery, St. Bogoroditsa Church in Pazardzhik, Sv. Troitsa Church in Bansko and many others. Your encounter with the mysterious world of Aladzha Monastery or Besarabovski Monastery will be an interesting part of your vacation. Our tour continues with the comfort and the thoughtful world of old houses of the Bulgarian national Revival, noble churches and quiet monasteries. Some of the churches and monasteries will fascinate you with their unique architecture, others with their valuable icons and masterly wall-paintings, as well as with their location in the most picturesque sites of Bulgaria.

Ancient Theatre - Plovdiv
Rila Monastery
St. Georgy Rotunda – Sofia

Towns and villages like Plovdiv, Bansko, Rilski, Melnik, Koprivshtitsa and Bansko are rich in cultural monuments and old houses, which evidence the valuable history of our country. Each old town or village has its own history. Plovdiv is among the five oldest towns in the world. The popularity of Bansko is due to the perfect conditions for skiing in combination with original folklore, site architecture and delicious national dishes in the famous taverns.

In the comfort of Tryavna, Koprivshtitsa, Kovachnica and Arbanasi you will see a miraculous combination of magnificent Bulgarian nature, original old architecture and unique national cuisine. Every building in these places is a testament to the culture and the genius of the local architects who lived 150-220 years ago.
Find out how picturesque the Bulgarian dishes are! Collecting all the warm colours from nature they are a delight for your eyes and soul. Pepper, carrots, celery, beans, onion, gumbo, potatoes – all the colours of the Bulgarian garden mix in the cooking pot. Meat is a natural and favourite part of Bulgarian dishes. Grilled or roasted, cooked with vegetables, fried, steamed – it is present everywhere...

Banitsa is one of the most popular Bulgarian specialties. In flavour of baked flour, homemade better and eggs may have an enchanting effect on you. And there are different types of banitsa – with cheese, with pumpkin and walnuts, with apples...

Wine and Cuisine

Bulgarians value tasty cuisine, delicious dishes, good wine and grape brandy (rakia). What they value even more is the sharing of these pleasures with friends. What awaits you includes a fine mixture of delicious culinary dishes, tasty and sweets that are difficult to describe, jolly southern folk music and wonderful presence of a lovely garden full of flowers or sight of a mountain spreading as far as the eyes can see...
If you look for adventures and extreme experiences, Bulgarian mountains will offer these to you to the maximum. Mountain rivers, waterfalls, wild nature and many opportunities for leisure and exciting meetings in the natural environment make the Bulgarian mountains a unique place. Do not miss the splendid views of the peaks of Pirin, Rila, Stara Planina and the Vitosha mountain range. There are also dozens of beautifully preserved ancient buildings and sights in the Bulgarian mountains. The National park Pirin and the National reserve Srebarna are included in the UNESCO list. Must-see stop points in your mountain travels should be some of the famous caves. There are about 6000 caves in Bulgaria. Some of them are not accessible, but it would be enough to feast your eyes with the glamour of the Yagodinska and Devetashka caves, Magourata, Saeva Dupka, Snejanka, Ledenika and Dyavolsko Garlo caves. In some of the caves there are preserved prehistoric wall-paintings dating back around 5000 years old. There are about 400 high-mountain lakes, scattered as large blue beads in the folds of Rila, Pirin and the Balkan Range and are designated national parks. The National park Pirin and the National reserve Srebarna are included in the UNESCO list. Magnificent water cascades, picturesque canyons with high rock formations reaching for the sky and transparent water lakes reflecting the neighboring mountain peaks. It’s not only part of the natural landmarks you will see walking through the nature paths that cross Bulgarian mountains. Bulgarian Mountains

Vitosha, Rila, Pirin and the Stara Planina mountains, and near them the impressive shape of the Balkan Range. There are also other mountains—smaller in size, but perfectly suitable for a walk. If you start counting the Bulgarian mountains you may count as many as 37 mountains...
Bulgaria has another face too – magnificent old houses sleeping quietly under white snow cover. Find the time for winter meetings with Elena, Koprivshtitsa, Tryavna, Shiroka Laka, and the Old town of Plovdiv, where you will find original architecture, unique Balkan Range colouring and a lot of romance...

Winter is a period of magic, colour, scent of smoke, delicious mugs and scented tea will make your vacation joyful and unforgettable.

Bansko, Borovets, Pamporovo – the winter resorts of Bulgaria. Modern infrastructure, excellent ski racing tracks, lifts, comfortable tea houses and restaurants, and skilled ski instructors will make your winter vacation unforgettable.

The ski tracks of the Bulgarian winter resorts host European and world championships for different winter sports. Along with the excellent conditions for sports there are also wonderful opportunities for relaxation in the recreational Spa and wellness complexes of the neighbouring hotels.

Bulgaria has another face too – magnificent old houses sleeping quietly under white snow cover. Find the time for winter meetings with Elena, Koprivshtitsa, Tryavna, Shiroka Laka, and the Old town of Plovdiv, where you will find original architecture, unique Balkan Range colouring and a lot of romance...

Winter is a period of magic, colour, scent of smoke, delicious mugs and scented tea will make your vacation joyful and unforgettable.

Bansko, Borovets, Pamporovo – the winter resorts of Bulgaria. Modern infrastructure, excellent ski racing tracks, lifts, comfortable tea houses and restaurants, and skilled ski instructors will make your winter vacation unforgettable. The ski tracks of the Bulgarian winter resorts host European and world championships for different winter sports. Along with the excellent conditions for sports there are also wonderful opportunities for relaxation in the recreational Spa and wellness complexes of the neighbouring hotels.

Bulgaria has another face too – magnificent old houses sleeping quietly under white snow cover. Find the time for winter meetings with Elena, Koprivshtitsa, Tryavna, Shiroka Laka, and the Old town of Plovdiv, where you will find original architecture, unique Balkan Range colouring and a lot of romance...

Winter is a period of magic, colour, scent of smoke, delicious mugs and scented tea will make your vacation joyful and unforgettable.

Bansko, Borovets, Pamporovo – the winter resorts of Bulgaria. Modern infrastructure, excellent ski racing tracks, lifts, comfortable tea houses and restaurants, and skilled ski instructors will make your winter vacation unforgettable. The ski tracks of the Bulgarian winter resorts host European and world championships for different winter sports. Along with the excellent conditions for sports there are also wonderful opportunities for relaxation in the recreational Spa and wellness complexes of the neighbouring hotels.
Magnificent Black Sea Shore

The Bulgarian seaside is a magical place with warm sun, clean blue sea, and beautiful nature. The beaches vary from quiet and peaceful to lively and bustling. The beaches on the Black Sea are known for their fine sand and clear waters. Join us for a day of fun and exploration of the beautiful Bulgarian coastline.

Let’s do some sports! On the splendid Bulgarian seaside, jogging and beach volleyball may contribute not only to the health and shaping of your body, but also bring you joy and amusement. Swimming, diving, and sailing—your sport vacation may include as diverse activities as you like. Day after day, sun, water and sports will mould your body into perfection.

The ancient culture of Bulgaria! Here, near the shore you will meet the unique charm of the Roman city of Apollonia and the magnificent Athos Monastery. The ancient town of Nessebar is among the cultural monuments with worldwide significance and under the protection of UNESCO. The Old town of Sozopol, Balchik, and cape Kaliakra—romantic stop points in your vacation.

Varna, Sunny Beach, Golden Sands, Albena, Nesebar, Pomorie—these lights of the luxurious resorts glimmer like the gems of a precious necklace. There are plenty of options for those valuing luxury and night life and for those who enjoy quiet vacations in nature and ancient culture.

The Bulgarian seaside is a magical place with warm sun, clean blue sea, and beautiful nature. The beaches vary from quiet and peaceful to lively and bustling. The beaches on the Black Sea are known for their fine sand and clear waters. Join us for a day of fun and exploration of the beautiful Bulgarian coastline.

Let’s do some sports! On the splendid Bulgarian seaside, jogging and beach volleyball may contribute not only to the health and shaping of your body, but also bring you joy and amusement. Swimming, diving, and sailing—your sport vacation may include as diverse activities as you like. Day after day, sun, water and sports will mould your body into perfection.

The ancient culture of Bulgaria! Here, near the shore you will meet the unique charm of the Roman city of Apollonia and the magnificent Athos Monastery. The ancient town of Nessebar is among the cultural monuments with worldwide significance and under the protection of UNESCO. The Old town of Sozopol, Balchik, and cape Kaliakra—romantic stop points in your vacation.

Varna, Sunny Beach, Golden Sands, Albena, Nesebar, Pomorie—these lights of the luxurious resorts glimmer like the gems of a precious necklace. There are plenty of options for those valuing luxury and night life and for those who enjoy quiet vacations in nature and ancient culture.
Beauty and health from 600 mineral water springs

In terms of number of mineral water springs, Bulgaria is ranked second following only Iceland. About 600 mineral springs have been discovered and examined till present. More than 80 percent of them have healing properties with the temperature of the water from 20 to 101 degrees Celsius.

The main advantage of Bulgaria is that bioclimatic and balneological resources are in rare combinations known as mountain combination and sea combination. Apart from the excellent natural attractions, you will also find the comfort of the new luxurious complexes in Velingrad, Hisaria, Kyustendil, Devin, Pomorie, Sandanski...

The most significant resource of thermal water in Bulgaria is located in Velingrad. The chemical contents of the water outline its greatest healing characteristics. The salty thermal water is efficient means for the healing of diseases of the locomotive system, the peripheral nervous system, the respiratory system, the digestive system, and many more. Another gift bestowed to Bulgaria is the resource of healing mud, liman mud, turf and bentonite clay. Pomorie, Mineral baths of Karlovo, Marikostino are the well-known mud-baths healing complexes.
Bulgarian folklore feasts and traditions are an exceptional mixture of colours and sounds, of pagan and Christian symbolism. The opportunity to be a real part of customs and rituals like “Bulgarian wedding”, “Dancing on embers”, “Koukers”, “Trifon Zarezan”, “Enyova bulya”, “Koleduvane”, “Lazaruvane”, “Butterfly”, “German”, etc. will leave unforgettable memories of your Bulgarian adventure.

The oil giving rose and the herbs take a special place of worship in Bulgarian traditions. Visit Kazanlak, Karlovo and Kalofer at the end of May to see the traditional Festival of the Rose.

Important elements of Bulgaria’s cultural map is the national and international folklore festivals and singing contests – the international Folklore Festivals in the towns of Burgas and Plovdiv, the national Folklore Fair in the “Roshcher” locality near the town of Smolyan, as well as in Koprivshtitsa, Karlovo and many others. Breathtaking mixture of traditions, talent and ornate colouring!

Holidays related to the household, family and children are typical for the Bulgarian traditions and customs. Christmas customs, Easter cakes and coloured eggs, name days and wedding rituals – they are intertwined with the unique Bulgarian spirit and identity.

Christian traditions combine in a unique way with pagan rituals. As you see, the Staves are being displayed on St. Trifon’s Eve and the Koukers are being performed. As one Bulgarian saying goes, “Bulgaria is a country of two worlds.”

Bulgarian folklore festivals and traditions are an exceptional mixture of colours and sounds, of pagan and Christian symbolism. The opportunity to be a real part of customs and rituals like “Bulgarian wedding”, “Dancing on embers”, “Koukers”, “Trifon Zarezan”, “Enyova bulya”, “Koleduvane”, “Lazaruvane”, “Butterfly”, “German”, etc. will leave unforgettable impressions of your Bulgarian adventure.

Christian traditions combine in a unique way with pagan rituals. As you see, the Koukers (men disguised in fearful masks and costumes that drive away evil) and the bare foot ember dancers, you will think to yourself “it’s magical”!
USEFUL INFORMATION

State government system: Parliamentary Republic

Capital city: Sofia (population 1.2 million)

Official language: Bulgarian, script – Cyrillic

Religion: Orthodox (85%), Muslim (8%), other (7%)

Time zone: GMT (London) + 2, Eastern Europe time (Germany) + 1

Climate: Humid continental, in the southern parts – transition Mediterranean. Average temperatures for January are from -2 to 2°C in the lowland and -10°C in the mountains, in July 19-25 degrees Celsius in the lowland and about 10 degrees Celsius in the higher parts of the mountains. Rainfall - 450-600 mm in the lowland, up to 1300 mm in the mountains.

Currency: Bulgarian lev is fixed to the euro, 1 EUR = 1.955 BGN

Important telephone numbers:
- code of Bulgaria: +359
- European emergency number: 112
- Sofia Airport - tel: +359 2 937 22 11
- Plovdiv Airport - tel: +359 32 601 127
- Varna Airport - tel: +359 52 573 323
- Burgas Airport - tel: +359 56 870 248
- Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism: Bulgaria, 1052 Sofia, 8 Slavyanska Str., Tel. +359 2 940 7001, fax: +359 2 987 2190, e-mail: e-docs@mee.government.bg, www.mee.government.bg, www.bulgariatravel.org
- National Tourism Information Center: Sofia 1000, 1 Sveta Nedelya Sqr., tel: 02/ 933 58 11, 933 58 21, 933 58 26

Operational Programme “Regional development” 2007 – 2013

The project is financed by the European Regional Development Fund and the state budget of the Republic of Bulgaria. The project is implemented by the Ministry of Tourism, the National Tourism Information Center, and the Bulgarian Travel Trade Association. The project is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund and the state budget of the Republic of Bulgaria.
Bulgaria

Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism
Bulgaria, 1052 Sofia, 8 Slavyanska Str.,
Tel. +359 2 940 7001, fax: +359 2 987 2190
e-mail: e-docs@mee.government.bg
www.mee.government.bg
www.bulgariatravel.org

This document is created within the framework of the project "Elaboration and distribution of advertising and informational materials for promotion of Bulgaria as a tourism destination", Agreement BG161PO002/3-02-4, realized with the financial support of Operational Programme "Regional development" 2007 - 2013, co-financed by the European Union through the European Fund for Regional Development. All responsibility for the contents of this document is borne by the beneficiary – the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism and in no circumstances it should be regarded that this document reflects the official position of the European Union and the Governing Authority.